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NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SOCIAL WORKER SENTENCED FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE BILLING FRAUD

A Rigby, Idaho social worker will serve four months in the Bannock County Jail in Pocatello followed by the same amount of time in home detention after being sentenced for fraudulently billing the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Medicaid program for services she did not provide.

Judge B. Lynn Winmill sentenced Cathy J. Anderson Jan. 20, after she pleaded guilty to one count of executing a scheme to defraud a health care benefit program. Anderson, owner of Safe Harbor Counseling, also was ordered to pay \$69,994.82 in restitution and another \$96,227.36 through a civil health care fraud action initiated by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Health and Welfare's Fraud Unit launched an investigation in October 2001 after receiving a complaint from a Medicaid client. The investigation revealed not only did Anderson bill for services she didn't provide, she billed for services while she was in training elsewhere, and for people she had never seen.

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(Editors: For more information, contact Bill Walker, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Boise, 208-334-5506.)